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ABSTRACT

In May 1984, a survey was conducted of a random sample of 802 adult citizens in Michigan to determine the public's opinion about postsecondary education in the state. Specifically, the survey sought collected information on the importance of a college education, reasons for attending college, schools best suited for a particular type of training or education, opinions about state financing of higher education, and quality of the instruction at public colleges and universities. Study findings included the following: (1) 74% of respondents believed a college education was "very important"; (2) if Michigan adults were to go back to school, the main reasons would be for personal improvement/enrichment or to take classes for job improvement, and 76% would attend on a part-time basis; (3) trade schools and community colleges were deemed the best suited to provide adults with job training/retraining; (4) 29% of respondents believed that the state's public four-year colleges and universities should get their income from state aid, 25% favored federal grants, while 24% believed tuition should be the source of funding; (5) 73% of respondents felt that financial aid for college students should be based on both need and ability; (6) just over half of those polled agreed that four-year institutions should raise admission requirements; (7) 71% of respondents felt that Michigan's public colleges and universities adequately met the educational needs of minorities, the disabled, and women; and (8) 68% of respondents felt their nearest community college was good or excellent. (JMC)

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One of a Series
of Public Opinion Surveys
Conducted for

Project Outreach of the Michigan Board of Education

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OPINIONS OF MICHIGAN CITIZENS ABOUT POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION MAY 13-15, 1984

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OPINIONS OF MICHIGAN CITIZENS ABOUT POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

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A Public Opinion Survey

of a

Cross-section of 802 Adults;

Interviewed by Telephone, May 13-15, 1984

*

Conducted by

Project Outreach
of the Michigan State Board of Education
Michigan Department of Education
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Project Outreach is a project of the Michigan State Board of Education and is funded by the Michigan Legislature. Ned S. Hubbell, APR, is Director of Project Outreach and served as the director of this opinion research study.

For additional information about this survey and other Project Outreach activities, write Project Outreach, Michigan Department of Education, P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909 or call 517/373-4631.

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All figures shown in this report are in percentages, rounded to the nearest percentage. When columns do not total 100%, it is due to rounding. When responses greatly exceed 100% it is due to multiple responses.

METHODOLOGY OF THE SURVEY

A public opinion survey of adult citizens in Michigan was conducted from May 13-15, 1984. The poll was conducted in telephone households of the state. This survey, which sought public opinion toward post-secondary education in Michigan, was first of its kind conducted as part of the Michigan State Board of Education's "Project Outreach".

Telephone numbers included in the sample were randomly generated by a computer in a sampling process known as random digit dialing (RDD). Thus, both listed and unlisted telephone households had an equal chance of being randomly selected. The sample was drawn on a proportionate basis by density of telephone households in the state.

Only one adult (18 years of age or older) was randomly selected. Respondents were selected based upon a random Respondent Selection Table developed by Kish and Carter. Average length of the interviews was 18 minutes.

A total of 40 experienced adults was utilized as interviewers in the survey. Each interviewer was trained in the use of the questionnaire by Ned S. Hubbell, Project Outreach Director. All interviewing was conducted from 5:00 to 9:30 p.m., with supervisors present during each of the three nights of polling.

A total of 802 interviews was completed. This sample size is based on 95% confidence that sample error is no larger than 3.5%.

All survey data was tabulated through computer facilities at Michigan State University. This report was written by Ned S. Hubbell.

Survey results are reported by two classifications of subgroups -- either by age categories or by type of community.

Other subgroup demographic information is shown in the composition of the sample, at the end of this report. Reports of the opinions of other survey subgroups may be obtained from Project Outreach.

#

OPINIONS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF A COLLEGE EDUCATION

Michigan citizens attach far greater importance to a college education today than do apparently citizens in other parts of the nation.

Nearly three-fourths (74%) of Michigan adults said a college education is very important today, when asked that question in the first statewide public opinion survey conducted statewide by Project Outreach of the Michigan State Board of Education. When the same question was asked of 1,540 adults in a national Gallup Poll, in May, 1983, 58% said a college education was very important.

In the Michigan poll, conducted May 13-15, 1984, another 21% of the 800 adults interviewed said a college education was fairly important, compared with 8% who held that viewpoint in the Gallup study.

Survey data reveals that citizens of all ages agree on the importance of a college education, whether they are young adults or senior citizens. Those who attach the highest importance (80%) are respondents who have graduated from a 4-year college or university. Blacks place a greater importance (88%) on a college education than do whites (72%). Respondents in Detroit attach a high level of importance (86%) to a college education, significantly more than do those in suburban areas (75%), other Michigan cities (73%), or those living in a rural area (68%).

The question and responses by age groups is shown below:

"First of all, how important is a college education today -- very important, fairly important, or not too important?

	('83 Gallup)	All Resp.	18-24 YrsOld	25-34 YrsOld	35-54 YrsOld	55-64 YrsOld	Over 65
Very important	(58%)	74%	72%	74%	73%	72%	78%
Fairly important	(31)	21	23	22	23	17	16
Not too important	(8)	4	5	4	2	10	4
Don't know	(3)	1	-	-	1	1	1

CITIZENS' REASONS FOR RETURNING TO SCHOOL

If Michigan adults were to go back to school, the main reasons would be for personal improvement or enrichment, to take classes for job improvement or employment.

Fifty-one percent (51%) of those polled indicated they would definitely return to school for personal improvement or enrichment. And 50% also said their return to school would be motivated by a desire to take classes to help them move up in their present job or company. This was the primary reason cited by young adults (66% of the 18-to-24-year-olds and 25-to-34-year-olds). The second major reason 18-to-24-year-olds would return to school would be to take classes to help them get a different job (cited by 63%).

"As you know, people often go back to school for various reasons. Let me name some of these reasons. If you, yourself, were to go back to school, would you definitely go back to school, possibly do so, or not go back to school for any of these reasons:"

(All Respondents)

	Yes Definitely	Yes Possibly	No Would Not	Don't Know	Other Resp.
For personal improvement or enrichment	51%	32%	15%	3%	-%
To take classes to help move up in present job/company	50	18	19	2	11
To take classes to help get a different job	43	23	22	3	9
To take classes leading to a bachelor's degree	29	19	30	3	19
To take classes to earn Associate degree	28	19	28	3	23
To get high school diploma	6	2	5	-	86
Already in school	4	-	-	-	96
Other reason	4	1	12		83

Junior/community college and 4-year college/university officials and administrators should be interested in age-groups' interests in earning either an associate degree or bachelor's degree. This is noted in the following Table:

TO TAKE CLASSES LEADING TO AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE:	All Resp.	18-24 YrsOld	25-34 YrsOld	35-54 YrsOld	55-64 YrsOld	Over 65
Yes, definitely	28%	46%	31%	25%	17%	23%
Yes, possibly	18	23	20	20	13	11
No, would not	28	19	15	28	51	40
Don't know	3	3	3	1	5	7
Other (not applicable)	23	9	31	26	14	19

TO TAKE CLASSES LEADING TO A BACHELOR'S DEGREE:	All Resp.	18-24 YrsOld	25-34 YrsOld	35-54 YrsOld	55-64 YrsOld	Over 65
Yes, definitely	29%	47%	32%	28%	15%	22%
Yes, possibly	19	25	24	19	13	11
No, would not	30	20	31	54	54	42
Don't know	3	3	2	1	4	9
Other (not applicable)	19	6	26	20	14	16

TYPE OF SCHOOL MOST LIKELY TO ATTEND

Survey respondents expressed a preference for returning to a certain kind of school dependent upon their needs or interests.

Data indicates these preferences:

* Junior/community college (37%)
* 4-year public college/university (31%)
* Private trade school (10%)
* Area vocational school (6%)
* 4-year private college (5%)
* Local high school (3%)
* Other (2%)

Respondents with a high school diploma, those with some college education and those with less than a high school education express a clear-cut preference for returning to a nearby junior/community college. Respondents with a college degree favor returning to a 4-year public college or university, should they go back to school.

The questions and responses, based upon present level of education of respondents, is shown below:

"What kind of school would you most likely attend: a 4-year college, a community college, an area vocational school, a local high school, or a private trade school?"

	All Resp.	Less than high sch.	H.S. Grad.	Post H.S.	College Grad.
Junior/community college	37%	25%	50%	46%	13%
4-year public college/ university	31	17	16	30	63
Private trade school	10	22	10	11	3
Area vocational school	6	6	10	5	2
4-year private college	5	2	4	3	9
Local high school	3	14	3	-	1
Other	2	1	1	1	3
None of these	1	2	-	1	3
Don't know	5	10	6	2	3

If Michigan adults were to go back to school, three-fourths (76%) of them indicated they would return on a part-time, rather than a full-time basis. Part-time basis is the dominant choice for respondents of all ages. It is interesting to note, however, that one-third (34%) of those over 65 would return to school on a full-time basis, should they decide to go back to school.

"If you were to go back to school, would you be likely to go on a full-time basis, or part-time?"

	All Resp.	18-24 YrsOld	25-34 YrsOld	35-54 YrsOld	55-64 YrsOld	Over 65
Part-time	76%	70%	82%	80%	80%	51%
Full-time	20	29	17	17	14	34
Don't know	3	-	1	2	6	14

WHO WOULD FINANCE CONTINUED EDUCATION

In 1981, The Gallup Organization conducted a nationwide survey of 1,500 American adults on the subject of post-secondary education. Responses indicated that if adults went back to school, 78% said they would personally pat the cost of any such additional education.

The same is true of Michigan adults in 1984. In this statewide survey, 67% said they would personally pay the costs of any such additional education. Another 13% indicated their employer would most likely pay for any courses, 2% said the government would pay such costs, 1% said either their parents or the G.I. Bill would pay for any such costs.

The Gallup question, asked in this Michigan survey, was:

"If you were to go back to school, who would likely pay for those courses: you yourself, your employer, or who?"

	All Resp.	18-24 YrsOld	25-34 YrsOld	35-54 YrsOld	55-64 YrsOld	Over 65
Respondent	73%	75%	64%	74%	83%	76%
Employer	13	8	21	14	6	4
Government (not current employer)	2	2	2	1	1	1
G.I. Bill	1	-	2	1	1	-
Parent(s)	1	8	-	-	-	-
Other	6	3	10	6	6	4
Don't know	4	3	2	3	3	14

SCHOOL BEST SUITED TO PROVIDE JOB TRAINING/RE-TRAINING FOR ADULTS

Trade schools are the preferred choice (30%) of survey respondents -- community colleges a close runner-up (27%) as best suited to provide adults with job training or re-training skills. A distant third preference (14%) are 4-year public colleges, followed by local adult education programs (10%).

The question and responses are as follows:

"Which of these schools is best suited to provide adults with job training or retraining skills for adults -- the local high school, adult education program, community college, trade school, private industry, or a 4-year college?"

	All Resp.	18-24 YrsOld	24-34 YrsOld	35-54 YrsOld	55-64 YrsOld	Over 65
Trade school	30%	31%	31%	31%	26%	31%
Community college	27	29	25	33	24	12
4-year public college	14	13	16	11	10	22
Adult education program	10	10	9	8	15	9
Private industry	5	9	7	4	4	3
4-year private college	3	3	4	3	3	3
Local high school	2	2	2	1	3	2
Other	2	1	-	2	4	4
Don't know	7	1	6	8	11	13

SCHOOL BEST SUITED TO PROVIDE CAREER PLANNING/GUIDANCE FOR ADULTS

When it comes to providing adults with career planning and guidance services, community colleges are the preferred choice of respondents in all age groups under 65 years of age.

Next preferred school for this service is the 4-year public college or university (21%), followed by local adult education programs.

> "Which of these schools is best suited to provide adults with career planning and guidance services -- the local high school, adult education program, community college, trade school, private industry, or a 4-year college?"

	All Resp.	18-24 YrsOld	25-34 YrsOld	35-54 YrsOld	55-64 YrsOld	Over 65
Community college	30%	37%	30%	34%	24%	19%
4-year public college	21	20	20	22	19	21
Adult education program	13	16	17	10	13	11
Trade school	8	11	5	8	9	10
Local high school	8	8	8	8	8	10
4-year private college	5	1	6	5	4	6
Private industry	5	3	7	4	5	4
Other	1	2	1	-	2	-
Don't know	9	2	6	8	16	19

SCHOOL BEST SUITED TO PROVIDE TRAINING FOR ADULTS IN TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

Michigan adults express a dominant preference for either the 4-year public colleges (30%) or trade schools (28%) for training adults in the skills required for modern technology.

Another 14% prefer the local junior/community college for this purpose, while 10% would turn to private industry for such training.

Responses to this question are shown below:

> "Which of these schools is best suited to provide adults with training in the skills required for modern technology -- the local high school, adult education programs, community college, trade schools, private industry, or a 4-year college?"

	All Resp.	18-24 YrsOld	25-34 YrsOld	35-54 YrsOld	55-64 YrsOld	Over 65
4-year public college	30%	28%	34%	29%	24%	32%
Trade school	28	40	31	27	24	20
Community college	14	9	10	18	14	13
Private industry	10	9	9	11	12	8
4-year private college	5	4	7	5	6	2
Adult education program	3	4	3	1	4	6
Local high school	1	3	-	1	3	-
Other	2	1	1	3	4	1
Don't know	7	4	4	5	9	17

SCHOOL BEST SUITED TO PROVIDE ADULTS WITH REMEDIAL INSTRUCTION IN BASIC SKILLS

Local adult education programs are the clear-cut preference for adults if they felt they needed remedial instruction in the basic skills of reading, math or science. Forty-three percent (43%) of those polled selected such programs as their preference.

Another 31% said they would turn to a local junior/community college for such instruction, especially 18-to-24-year olds.

A distant third preference (15%) was the local high school.

The question was stated in this manner:

> "Some adults find that they need some remedial (make-up) instruction in order to learn certain skills. That might include "catch-up" education in some basic skills -- like reading, math or science. If you required that, where would you prefer to go for it -- a local high school, adult education program, a community college or a 4-year college?"

	All Resp.	18-24 YrsOld	25-34 YrsOld	35-54 YrsOld	55-64 YrsOld	Over 65
Adult education program	43%	41%	45%	45%	40%	40%
Community college	31	38	33	32	25	26
Local high school	15	12	12	15	26	10
4-year public college	6	7	4	5	3	11
4-year private college	2	-	3	1	-	6
Other	1	1	1	-	2	-
Don't know	2	1	1	1	4	6

ENROLLMENT OF CITIZENS IN A FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY

A slim majority of households (52%) included in this statewide survey sample have had a member of the household attend a 4-year college or university. The great plurality of them -- one-third of all households (33%), were enrolled in a Michigan public college or university.

Only nine percent (9%) of the households polled had someone attend a college or university in another state. Four percent (4%) reported enrollment in a private or independent college in Michigan. Another 4% of those polled had someone attend both a Michigan college or university and one in another state; 1% reported enrollment in both a private and public college in the state.

The question asked, and responses:

> "Have you or a member of your household, ever attended a 4-year college or university? (IF "YES") Was that a college in Michigan, or out state? Public or private college?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Michigan college/ university (public)	33%	34%	33%	33%	32%
Michigan college/ university (private)	4	3	4	6	4
Outstate college/ university	9	8	9	12	5
No	48	47	50	41	55
Don't Know	-	-	-	1	-
Both Michigan public & private college/university	1	4	1	1	2
Both Michigan & outstate college/university	4	4	2	7	3

Two-thirds of the households polled who had someone enroll in a four-year college/university report that person graduated. That represents 24% of all respondents interviewed in the survey.

"(IF "YES") May I ask, did you/they graduate?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Yes	66%	72%	65%	69%	60%
No	28	23	29	26	31
Don't Know	6	5	7	5	9

Respondents who reported a member of the household enrolled in a college in another state gave, as the major reason, being a resident of another state at the time of enrollment in college. Another 12% of that group of respondents cited personal preference as the reason while another 11% elected an out-of-state college for specialized training offered by the particular institution.

"(IF ATTENDED AN OUTSTATE COLLEGE) Why did you/they go to a college outside of Michigan?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Lived in that state for a time	66%	44%	82%	64%	68%
For specialized training	11	11	8	13	10
Have relatives there	3	22	-	3	3
State colleges too expensive	-	-	-	-	-
Personal preference	12	22	11	5	12
Other	7	-	-	13	6
Don't Know	1	-	-	3	2

RESPONDENTS' ACCESS TO A PUBLIC 4-YEAR COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY

Eight out of every 10 persons interviewed (81%) said there is a public 4-year college or university within driving distance of their home. Nine out of every 10 Detroiters (90%) report that, in contrast with 73% of those respondents who live in a rural area of the state.

The majority (54%) of those who live within driving distance of a four-year public college/university report that they can get to that college in less than one-half hour. But the majority (54%) also report there is no public transportation that they could take to get to the college. The exception to that are those who live in the city of Detroit. Nine out of every ten of these respondents (89%) indicate such transportation is available.

"Is there a public 4-year college or university within driving distance of your home?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Yes	81%	90%	81%	84%	73%
No	15	7	14	10	26
Don't Know	5	4	5	6	2

"(IF "YES") About how long would it take for you to get there?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Less than 1/2 hour	54%	77%	56%	53%	37%
More than 1/2 hour but less than one hour	33	15	27	40	44
Over one hour	13	5	17	6	19
Don't Know	11	3	1	1	-

"Can you ride public transportation to the nearest 4-year college or university?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Yes	39%	89%	39%	44%	9%
No	54	5	55	47	87
Don't Know	7	6	6	9	4

OPINIONS ABOUT FINANCING MICHIGAN'S PUBLIC 4-YEAR COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES

Survey respondents believe the state's public four-year colleges and universities should get their income from three main sources -- State aid (29%), Federal grants (25%) and tuition (24%).

The listing of three sources was rotated one of three different ways to avoid any possible bias due to placement of an item in the list read to all persons interviewed.

Another 11% of those polled felt such financing should be evenly distributed among all three sources -- State aid, tuition, and Federal grants. Only 3% felt donations or endowments should contribute to the primary costs of the institution.

"Public 4-year colleges and universities in Michigan get their income from these four sources -- tuition, state aid, donations/endowments and Federal grants. In your opinion, which one should contribute most of the college's income?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
State Aid	29%	21%	30%	31%	27%
Federal grants	25	40	23	25	25
Tuition	24	16	23	30	24
Combination of all 4	11	12	13	8	9
Donations/endowments	3	1	3	2	6
Don't Know	7	10	8	4	9

OPINIONS ABOUT TUITION COSTS IN MICHIGAN'S PUBLIC 4-YEAR COLLEGES

One-half of those polled (50%) believe the present tuition at a Michigan public four-year college or university is too high. Another 29% think costs are about right but only 2% feel such cost is too low. One out of every five persons interviewed (19%) have no opinion on the matter.

The majority of Detroiters interviewed (58%) as well as suburban residents in the metro area and elsewhere (55%) hold the opinion college tuition is too high.

"Based on what you know, is the present tuition at a Michigan public 4-year college or university, too high, about right, or too low?

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Too high	50%	58%	49%	55%	43%
About right	29	23	32	24	32
Too low	2	6	1	2	2
Don't Know	19	14	17	20	23

In a follow-up question, the plurality of respondents (37%) believe the costs of attending a Michigan public 4-year college or university are generally higher than that in other states. Another one-third (37%) believe tuition costs in Michigan and in other state's 4-year public colleges are about the same. Only 4% think Michigan's public college costs are lower than those in other states. Better than one-fourth of those interviewed (26%) do not know how Michigan public college costs compare with that in other states.

"Do you think the costs of attending a Michigan public 4-year college or university are generally higher than in other states, about the same, or lower?

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Higher	37%	44%	38%	42%	26%
About the same	33	27	32	36	30
Lower	4	10	3	2	5
Don't Know	26	19	26	20	39

The vast majority of survey respondents (72%) believe that colleges or universities that freeze tuition costs -- at the same level as last year, should get more state aid. Twenty-one percent (21%) disagree, while 7% have no opinion.

However, the majority of those polled (55%) disagree with the notion that a state college or university that conducts research aimed at improving the state's economy should get more state aid. Thirty-eight percent (38%) support that while 6% have no opinion.

"The Governor has suggested that public 4-year colleges or universities that freeze their tuition costs -- at the same level as last year, should get more State aid. Do you agree or disagree?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Agree	72%	82%	73%	68%	70%
Disagree	21	11	19	26	23
Don't Know	7	7	8	6	6

"If a State college or university conducts research aimed at improving Michigan's economy or employment, should that college get more State aid than other colleges, or should that make no difference in State aid?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
More state aid	38%	41%	37%	42%	36%
Makes no difference	56	53	55	53	60
Don't Know	6	6	8	5	5

OPINIONS ABOUT FINANCIAL AID FOR STUDENTS

Financial aid for college students should be based both on need and ability, said 73% of those polled. That is the opinion of respondents in all age groups, although those over age 65 have a stronger opinion than other people that need of the student is more important. One-fourth of those respondents (24%) feel need should be the determinant, in contrast with the opinion of young adults.

Among all persons interviewed, seventeen percent (17%) think such financial aid should be based mostly on the student's need, 8% believe it should be based solely on ability, with 1% having no opinion.

"Should financial aid for college students be based mostly on need, or academic ability, or both?"

	All Resp.	18-24 Yrs. Old	25-34 Yrs. Old	35-54 Yrs. Old	55-64 Yrs. Old	Over 65
Need	17%	22%	16%	13%	20%	24%
Ability	8	5	4	9	12	17
Both	73	73	80	77	64	55
Don't Know	1	-	-	1	4	5

In a pair of follow-up questions, a solid majority of respondents (62%) said they were opposed to the state providing any form of state aid for students going to a private or independent college. Thirty-two percent (32%) support that, while 6% have no opinion.

But respondents were almost evenly divided as to whether state financial aid should be provided for students who wish to attend a privately-run or industry-operated trade school. On that question, 47% said "yes", 49% said "no".

"Should the State provide any form of state aid for students going to a private independent college?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Yes	32%	36%	33%	34%	27%
No	62	59	62	62	66
Don't Know	6	6	6	4	7

"Should the State provide student financial aid for these students who wish to attend a privately-run or industry-operated trade school?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Yes	47%	56%	47%	49%	43%
No	49	37	49	49	49
Don't Know	4	7	3	2	8

PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION IN PUBLIC COLLEGES

Very few (6%) of the state's young adults (18 to 24 years old) think the quality of instruction in a Michigan public 4-year college or university is not as good as that offered in such colleges in other states. Seven out of every ten of that age group (70%) feel the quality of instruction in a Michigan public college is the same as that in another state; 12% believe it is better.

Among all survey respondents, the majority (54%) feel the quality of instruction in a Michigan public college is the same as that of similar institutions in other states. Another 16% think such quality is better in a state college or university, only 3% believe it is not as good as that in other states, and 2% felt it depended on which out-of-state college was considered. One out of every four respondents (24%) had no opinion.

"Would you say the quality of instruction provided at a Michigan public college or university is better than in public colleges or universities in other states, about the same, or not as good?"

	All Resp.	18-24 Yrs. Old	25-34 Yrs. Old	35-54 Yrs. Old	55-64 Yrs. Old	Over 65
Better	16%	12%	14%	17%	18%	14%
About the same	54	70	57	52	48	44
Not as good	3	6	4	2	5	2
Depends on which out-state college	2	2	1	3	2	1
Don't Know	24	11	24	25	27	38

In a related question, the plurality of respondents (40%) do not believe there is any difference in the quality of instruction offered at either a state public or private college. However, 23% believe the quality of instruction provided in a private or independent college is better than that of a state public institution.

"How about the quality of instruction at a Michigan private college or university? Is that better, not as good, or about the same as the instruction in a public college/university?"

	All Resp.	18-24 Yrs. Old	25-34 Yrs. Old	35-54 Yrs. Old	55-64 Yrs. Old	Over 65
Better	23%	30%	25%	19%	26%	22%
Not as good	6	6	7	8	7	2
About the same	40	50	43	38	36	32
Depends on which college	3	2	1	4	5	3
Don't Know	28	13	25	31	26	40

VALUE OF A DEGREE FROM A MICHIGAN PUBLIC 4-YEAR COLLEGE

Not only is the quality of instruction in a state public college/university the same as that of out-of-state institutions, but also the value of a degree from a state college.

Seventy percent (70%) believe a bachelor's degree from a state public 4-year or university means just as much as that from an out-of-state college. Only one out of every 10 respondents (10%) believe a bachelor's degree from a Michigan public college or university means more than one from a college in another state. Only 4% think such a degree means less than one from an out-of-state college, while 8% said that depended on the degree, particular institution, etc. Another 8% had no opinion.

Similar opinions were expressed about the value of a graduate degree. Six out of every 10 respondents (60%) feel a graduate degree from a state public 4-year college/university means just the same as one from an out-of-state institution. Fourteen percent (14%) think it means more if earned at a Michigan public institution, 10% think it would depend on the degree (which college, etc.), 5% said "not as good", and 10% had no opinion.

"If a student earns a Bachelor's degree from a Michigan public 4-year college or university, do you think this means more than a degree from an out state college or university, about the same, or not as much?

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Means more than from other states	10%	10%	8%	12%	11%
About the same	70	64	75	66	66
Not as much	4	6	3	6	5
Depends on degree, college, etc.	8	6	7	11	8
Don't Know	8	15	7	6	11

"How about a graduate degree -- like a Master's degree or Ph.D.? Does one from a Michigan university mean more than one from an outstate university, about the same, or not as much?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Means more than from out-state college	14%	18%	14%	15%	12%
About the same	60	53	63	60	60
Not as good	5	4	4	7	6
Depends on degree, other college, etc.	10	8	10	12	9
Don't Know	10	16	10	7	14

OPINIONS ABOUT CERTAIN ADMISSION/GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A slim majority of those polled (52%) agreed with a recommendation of the National Commission on Excellence in Education -- four year colleges and universities should raise admission requirements. Thirty-nine percent (39%) disagreed while 9% had no opinion.

There are differences of opinion on this question. The majority of young adults (52%), age 18 to 24, disagree. This is in contrast to older adults. Those from 35 to 55 show a support for that idea, by a margin of 55%, while those over age 65 favor it, 58% to 24%.

In response to a specific entrance or graduation requirement recommended by the State Board of Education, the majority of respondents (57%) disagreed. Forty percent (40%) agreed that Michigan colleges and universities should require that students have two years of foreign language instruction to be admitted or to graduate. Another 3% had no opinion. Strong disagreement (63%) was voiced by adults ages 18 to 24, and 70% by those ages 25 to 34 years old.

However, there are almost evenly divided opinions on the matter of colleges increasing graduation requirements. While 39% agree, 43% are opposed and 18% have no opinion.

The questions and responses to these questions are shown below:

> "The National Commission on Excellence in Education made several recommendations to improve education in America. One of those was that 4-year colleges and universities should raise admission requirements. Incoming students should be required to have taken more specific courses in high school and have performed at a higher level of achievement. Do you agree or disagree that Michigan public college entrance requirements should be raised?"

	All Resp.	18-24 Yrs. Old	25-34 Yrs. Old	35-54 Yrs. Old	55-56 Yrs. Old	Over 65
Agree	52%	46%	44%	55%	55%	58%
Disagree	39	52	49	37	31	24
Don't Know	9	2	7	8	14	19

"The State Board of Education has recommended that Michigan colleges and universities require that students have 2 years of foreign language instruction -- to be admitted or to graduate. Do you agree or disagree with this?

	All Resp.	18-24 Yrs. Old	25-34 Yrs. Old	35-54 Yrs. Old	55-56 Yrs. Old	Over 65
Agree	40%	36%	29%	43%	46%	51%
Disagree	57	63	70	54	52	38
Don't Know	3	1	2	3	2	11

"How about college or university graduation requirements? Do you think these should be increased, at Michigan's public 4-year colleges/universities?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Yes	39%	47%	39%	38%	37%
No	43	37	45	43	42
Don't Know	18	16	16	19	21

PLANNING/COORDINATION OF **4-YEAR COLLEGES AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

The majority of those interviewed **(55%)** were of the opinion that the State Board of Education should be responsible for the planning and coordinating of programs between and among Michigan community colleges and universities.

Respondents chose between the State Board, the Legislature, the Governor and the individual institutions. The order of these four in a list read to respondents was rotated four different ways to avoid bias due to placement of an item in the list.

While 55% favored the State Board, 31% favored such planning be left up to the individual institutions, 4% ascribed that role to the Legislature, and 1% to the office of the Governor.

The question was worded in the following manner:

> "Who should do the planning and coordinating of programs between and among Michigan community colleges and 4 year colleges and universities? Should that be done by...State Board of Education, The Governor, Legislature, Individual institution."

(All Respondents)

State Board of Education	55%
Individual institutions	31
Legislature	4
The Governor	1
Other	1
Don't know	8

SERVING THE NEEDS OF MINORITIES, HANDICAPPERS AND WOMEN IN COLLEGE

The majority of respondents -- 71%, think that Michigan's system of community colleges and 4-year institutions adequately meets the educational needs of minorities, handicappers and women. Another 15% disagree, saying those colleges do not meet such needs while 2% feel some of the needs are met, but not for all such students.

Although nearly two-thirds (64%) of black respondents and 47% of other minorities interviewed in the survey also feel such needs are met, 27% of both black and other minorities interviewed disagreed. Seventy-two percent (72%) of white respondents feel these needs are met.

The question and responses are shown next, followed by a Table that indicates the free responses to an "open" probe question asked only of those who do not feel these colleges do not adequately meet the needs of minorities, handicappers and women students.

The questions, and responses, are shown on the following page.

"In your opinion do you believe Michigan's system of community colleges and 4-year institutions adequately meets the educational needs of minorities, handicappers, and women?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Yes, meets those needs	71%	77%	71%	66%	72%
No	15	16	13	18	15
Does for some, not for all	2	1	3	2	2
Don't know	12	5	13	14	10

(IF "NO") "Why do you feel that way?"

(All Respondents)

	(28% of All Resp.)	(16% of Females)	(13% of Males)	(27% of Blacks)	(27% of Others)	(13% of Whites)
There is total discrimination	28%	26%	31%	43%	20%	24%
No provisions for handicappers	15	17	12	14	-	16
Lack of financial aids	13	13	14	5	40	14
Inaccessible for handicappers	12	9	18	5	40	12
Women are discriminated against	12	14	10	14	20	11
Minority discrimination	12	7	20	5	-	14
Handicapper discrimination	5	6	4	-	20	5
Miscellaneous	7	4	10	14	-	5
Can't say	13	17	8	14	-	13

INTEREST IN COLLEGE COURSES ON PUBLIC TV OR CABLE TV

There is broad support for community colleges and 4-year institutions offering instruction in college courses on public TV or cable television. Three-fourths (74%) of those polled in this statewide survey endorsed such a concept.

Support was highest in suburban communities (71%), 60-63% in Detroit and other Michigan cities and 59% in the state's rural areas.

In addition, nearly three-fourths (73%) of those who favor such TV college instruction indicated an interest in taking such a course. (They represent 46% of all persons interviewed in the poll.) The younger the respondent, the higher the interest in such a course, although 78% of those ages 35-54 expressed an interest in such college instruction. Data also indicates that 40% of those over 65 also expressed such an interest.

The questions and responses are shown in the following Tables:

"Do you favor or oppose 4-year colleges or universities or community colleges offering instruction in college courses on public TV or cable television?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Favor	74%	60%	63%	71%	59%
Oppose	29	34	28	23	33
Don't know	7	5	8	6	8

(IF FAVOR) "If college courses were offered on public TV in your area, would you be interested in taking such a course?"

	(64% of All Resp.)	(60% of Detroit)	(63% of Other Cities)	(71% of Suburbs)	(59%) Rural
Yes	73%	82%	71%	73%	74%
No	23	14	25	22	23
No public TV in area	-	-	5	-	-
Already am	-	2	-	-	1
Don't know	3	2	3	5	2

RESPONDENTS' ACCESS TO A JUNIOR/COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Citizens' access to junior/community colleges in Michigan was evident by responses to questions about proximity of such colleges to survey respondents.

Nine out of every ten (91%) of those interviewed live within driving distance of a junior/community college.

And eight out of every ten persons (81%) said they could drive to such a school in less than one-half hour. Another 15% indicated such a school was within a one hour drive of their home. One third (34%) of those living in a rural area said such a drive would take longer than one-half hour, but would still be within a one-hour drive.

This pair of questions and responses is shown below:

"Is there a junior/community college within driving distance of your home?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburb	Rural
Yes	91%	89%	92%	95%	88%
No	5	7	4	2	9
Don't know	4	4	4	3	3

(IF YES) "About how long would it take for you to get to the nearest junior/community college?"

	(91% of All Resp.)	(89% of Detroit)	(92% of Other Cities)	(95% of Suburb)	(88% of Rural)
Less than 1/2 hr.	81%	91%	82%	92%	59%
More than 1/2 hr., less than 1 hr.	15	8	13	5	34
Over 1 hour	4	1	5	-	7
Don't know	1	-	1	1	1

The majority of those interviewed (53%) said there was no public transportation that they could use to get to the nearest junior/community college. In Detroit, however, 80% of those respondents indicated such transportation was available. It was just the opposite in rural areas of the state -- 84% of rural respondents interviewed said no such public transportation was available to them.

Among all 802 persons interviewed, 37% said they could ride public transportation to the nearest junior/community college.

"Can you ride public transportation to the nearest junior/community college?"

	(91% of All Resp.)	(89% of Detroit)	(92% of Other Cities)	(95% of Suburbs)	(88% of Rural)
Yes	37%	80%	38%	38%	14%
No	53	15	51	45	84
Don't know	10	5	11	17	2

ENROLLMENT OF RESPONDENTS IN A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

According to survey results, residents of nearly one-half (46%) of Michigan households have enrolled at one time in a junior/community college. That high utilization of such services is evident among citizens between the ages of 18 to 54, but only 28% of those over 65 report that of their households.

The same high utilization of a junior/community college is evident in all types of communities, with the exception of the rural area. Yet 39% of respondents in rural areas report that they or a member of their household has or had been enrolled in a course or courses at a community college.

The question and responses based upon age groups of respondents is shown on the following page:

"Have you, or anyone in your household, ever attended a Michigan junior/community college?"

	All Resp.	18-24 YrsOld	25-34 YrsOld	35-54 YrsOld	55-64 YrsOld	Over 65
Yes	46%	49%	49%	50%	41%	28%
No	54	49	51	49	59	71
Don't know	-	1	-	-	-	-

	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburb	Rural
Yes	45%	48%	49%	39%
No	55	52	51	60
Don't know	-	-	-	1

PRIMARY FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In 1977 when The Gallup Organization first conducted a nationwide survey of public attitudes toward community colleges, the number #1 function of such a school, respondents said, was to provide academic training leading to a bachelor's degree. That same primary function was voiced again in a 1981 follow-up study by Gallup. In both cases, providing vocational/technical training was seen as a distant secondary function.

This 1984 research study in Michigan indicates the type functions are of equal importance to citizens in this state. Eighty-eight percent (88%) felt providing academic training leading to a degree was a very important function of the junior/community college. And vocational/technical training was also described as a very important function of a community college.

A third major function, 75% of respondents said, was providing make-up instruction in basic skill subjects. (This was not listed as a choice among Gallup respondents.)

Further, 54% said producing community services -- like short, non-credit courses, job-change counseling, etc., was a very important community college function.

The other major function of junior/community colleges -- providing opportunities for cultural enrichment, was seen as only a fairly important function.

Rankings of each function are displayed in the next Table:

"Junior/community colleges have a number of functions. As I read each of these, tell me if you think that is a very important function of a community college, somewhat important function, or not too important a function."

(All Respondents)

	Very Imp.	Somewhat Imp.	Not too Imp.	Don't Know
Provide academic training leading to bachelor's degree	88%	10%	1%	1%
Provide vocational/technical training	86	11	1	2
Provide make-up instruction in basic skill areas	75	17	6	2
Provide community services (non-credit, short courses, counseling, etc.)	54	34	9	4
Provide opportunities for cultural enrichment	39	43	15	2

CITIZENS' RATINGS OF THE EDUCATION/TRAINING PROVIDED BY THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Survey respondents gave a high vote of confidence to the nearest junior/community college.

Twenty-two percent (22%) gave those schools an "excellent" rating and 46% a "good" rating on the way in which the local 2-year college meets the educational needs of citizens in their area. Another 14% awarded the community colleges a "fair" rating in this regard, only 3% a "poor" rating, and 15% had no opinion.

Almost identical ratings were described for the education or training provided by the public junior/community colleges. On this question, 19% rated this as "excellent", 48% "good", 11% as "fair", 2% as "poor" while 20% had no opinion.

Respondents who rated the schools as "excellent" or "good" were asked for reasons for these high ratings. The main influencing factor, they said, was the wide range of subjects, services that are offered (46%). Two other major reasons were "has a good reputation" (22%) and due to the high quality of education that is provided (20%).

These questions and responses follow:

"How would you rate the way in which the nearest junior/community college meets the educational needs of citizens in your area -- excellent, good, fair or poor?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Excellent	22%	16%	26%	22%	17%
Good	46	34	49	46	47
Fair	14	25	10	11	19
Poor	3	10	1	4	2
Don't know	15	15	13	17	15

(IF EXCELLENT OR GOOD) "In what way?"

	(22%of All Resp.)	(16% of Detroit)	(26% of Other Cities)	(22% of Suburbs)	(17% of Rural
Subjects offered	46%	50%	47%	44%	48%
Has good reputation	21	14	23	23	21
Quality of educ. provided	20	14	21	19	22
Convient location	9	5	8	11	9
Good instruction	8	5	9	8	6
Wide range of services	6	5	6	3	11
Credits transfer	5	3	6	6	3
Less expensive	4	3	3	5	4
Have Associate degrees	3	6	5	-	2
Miscellaneous	2	6	-	1	4
Don't know	10	14	10	7	10

(IF POOR) "Would you mind telling me why you feel that way?"

	(3% of All Resp.)
Poor instruction	3%
Poor reputation	1
Money is misspent	1
Poor curriculum	.5
Miscellaneous	1

"How good is the education/training provided by the nearest junior/community college? Excellent, good, fair, or poor?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Excellent	19%	15%	23%	17%	17%
Good	48	38	51	47	48
Fair	11	22	8	10	12
Poor	2	5	1	3	1
Can't say	20	19	17	23	22

FAMILIARITY WITH THE GOVERNING BODY/MANAGEMENT OF A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Very few respondents, however, are sure of who actually runs the community college nearest to their home.

One out of every five respondents (21%) believe it is a college district board of trustees. Another 12% feel it is a State board of trustees while 11% think it is a local school district board of education. Still another 5% ascribe that role to county government, 3% to a 4-year college board, 1% to city government and 1% to some other body. Nearly one-half of those polled (46%) said they did not know.

The governance question was phrased in this way:

> "As you understand it, who runs the community college nearest to your home? Is it a local school district Board of Education, a district college board, a 4-year college board, or a State Board of Trustees?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburb	Rural
District college board	21%	18%	21%	22%	22%
State Board of Trustees	12	11	14	8	12
School district Board of Education	11	7	11	14	9
4-year college board	3	3	3	3	5
County government	5	8	4	8	3
City government	1	1	1	-	1
Other	1	-	1	1	-
Don't know	46	44	48	37	53

While the typical survey respondent may not be sure who or what body actually runs the community college nearest their home, the same apparent "halo effect" about the school was evident in responses to the school's management.

When asked to rate the way in which the nearest community college is managed, 15% said "excellent", 41% "good", 13% "fair" and only 3% said "poor". Another 28% did not know.

"In your opinion, how well managed is the nearest junior/ community college? Excellent, good, fair or poor?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Excellent	15%	7%	17%	17%	12%
Good	41	27	45	37	44
Fair	13	25	9	10	15
Poor	3	14	1	4	2
Don't know	28	27	27	32	27

RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS ABOUT FINANCING JUNIOR/COMMUNITY COLLEGES

When asked what should be the primary source of income to a community college, survey respondents ascribed that role to state aid. When asked to select the primary income from one of three sources -- state aid, tuition, and local taxes, forty percent (40%) favored state aid, 25% named tuition, 14% favored local taxes and another 14% felt income should be balanced among all three.

To avoid any possible bias for or against an item, the list of three sources was rotated among all persons interviewed to avoid bias due to placement of each item in the list.

This question was worded in the following manner:

"Presently, junior/community colleges receive their income mostly from three sources -- tuition, state aid, and local taxes. In your opinion, which one should contribute most of the income to operate the community college...tuition, state aid, local taxes?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
State aid	40%	33%	41%	42%	35%
Tuition	25	22	22	27	29
Local taxes	14	16	15	15	11
Combination of all 3	14	19	15	11	16
Other	2	4	2	2	1
Don't know	5	5	4	3	8

A solid vote for support was evident when survey respondents were asked if they would vote for or against a local millage increase to enable the local community college to continue providing services.

Two-thirds (67%) of those interviewed said they would vote for such a proposal, 15% against, 8% said it would depend on the cost of the millage increase and 9% were undecided.

"If the junior/community college nearest your home needed additional tax millage to continue providing educational services to the community, would you vote for or against such a millage increase proposal?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
For	67%	70%	68%	69%	62%
Against	15	16	14	13	19
Depends on cost	8	5	10	8	8
Undecided/declined	4	3	4	5	5
Don't know	5	7	4	4	6

OPINIONS ABOUT EMTRANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES

The majority of respondents in all types of communities throughout the state endorsed a recommendation of the National Commission on Excellence in Education that community colleges raise some entrance requirements.

Nearly six out of every 10 persons interviewed (59%) agreed with the recommendation students wishing to enroll in an academic degree program should have taken specific, high school courses and earned a certain performance in those courses.

The one exception to that nearly blanket endorsement was noted from young adults, ages 18 to 24. This group was evenly divided in their opinions -- 47% agreed but 49% disagreed wish such a plan. Older adults were more supportive, as was 54% of respondents who have enrolled in the past in a community college.

"The National Commission on Excellence in Education recommended that junior/community colleges should raise admission requirements for students who want to enroll in an academic degree program. The Commission suggests that these students should have taken specific, high school courses and earned a certain performance in those subjects, in order to be admitted to a community college. Do you agree or disagree with this?"

	All Resp.	Detroit	Other Cities	Suburbs	Rural
Agree	59%	57%	57%	58%	61%
Disagree	36	38	37	38	32
Don't know	5	4	6	4	7

SUPPORT FOR THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES' SERVICES FOR NON-STUDENTS

Respondents of all age groups, living in all types of Michigan communities, strongly endorsed the junior/community college offering a range of its services to other people in the community, even if they are not students of the college.

Strongest support is for public use of the college's library and its services, favored by 80% of those polled. Personal counseling services, tutoring services and use of college athletic facilities for non-students was also favored by six out of every 10 persons interviewed. In addition, 53% endorsed the idea of the college making available to non-students its theatre/fine arts opportunities.

"Tell me if you favor or oppose the junior/community college providing these kinds of services for non-students?"

(All Respondents)

	Favor	Oppose	Don't Know
Library services	80%	18%	2%
Personal counseling services	60	35	4
Use of athletic facilities	60	35	5
Tutoring services	59	36	6
Theatre/fine arts	53	41	6

COMPOSITION OF SURVEY SAMPLE
(95%; ± 3.5%)

S = 802

SEX OF RESPONDENTS

Female	54%
Male	46

COLLEGE EXPERIENCE OF RESPONDENTS

*Respondents or member of their household attended Michigan public 4-yr. college/ university	33%
*Respondents who attended an out-of-state college/university	9
*Respondents or member of household attended Michigan private 4-year college	4
*Respondents who are college graudates	23
*Respondents or member of their household who attended Michigan junior/community college	46

EDUCATION LEVEL OF ALL RESPONDENTS

Grade school or less (Grades 1-8)	4%
Some high school (Grades 9-12)	9
High school graduate	36
Vocational-technical school	3
Some college	25
College graduate	14
Post-graduate study	9

COMPOSITION OF SURVEY SAMPLE
(Continued)

AGES OF RESPONDENTS

18-19 years old	4%
20-24 years old	9
25-29 years old	11
30-34 years old	13
35-39 years old	15
40-44 years old	9
45-49 years old	7
50-54 years old	7
55-59 years old	6
60-64 years old	6
65 and over	12
Declined to answer	1

TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF RESPONDENTS

Less than $10,000	14%
More than $10,000; less than $15,000	11
More than $15,000; less than $25,000	21
More than $25,000; less than $35,000	21
More than $35,000	24
Don't know	2
Declined to answer	5

RACE/ETHNIC STATUS OF RESPONDENTS

Black	9%
Hispanic	1
Native American	1
White	87
Other	1
Declined to answer	1

TYPE OF COMMUNITY OF RESPONDENTS

Detroit	9%
Other large city	16
Suburban area	26
Small city/town	25
Village/rural area	21
Can't say	2

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